



watermeal

Wolffia punctata

Kingdom: Plantae
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta - flowering plants

Features

These floating aquatic plants are made of individual segments called fronds. Each frond is spherical and lacks roots. They are the smallest flowering plants in the world and rarely bloom.

Natural History

Watermeals grow in standing water and appear as minute, green grains floating on the water in a mat. They often are associated with duckweeds. Watermeals and duckweeds may produce a layer one to two inches thick on the water's surface. They are eaten by waterfowl. They are found in the quiet waters of marshes and backwaters throughout the state.

Habitats

Mississippi River; interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

Iowa Status

uncommon; native

Iowa Range

scattered throughout Iowa in suitable habitats

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.